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To enrich lives through effective and caring service.



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June 23, 2008

To: Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Tom Tindall *Tam Tindall*
Interim Director

Subject: **RECONFIGURATION OF THE COUNTYWIDE INTEGRATED RADIO SYSTEM (CWIRS)**

This is a status report on the Internal Services Department (ISD) project for frequency band reconfiguration of the Countywide Integrated Radio System (CWIRS). CWIRS is a County radio system used for mobile communications by several County departments and agencies, including Health Services, Public Works, the District Attorney, Probation, and ISD. The Sheriff and Fire Departments do not use CWIRS and are not impacted by the reconfiguration project.

Background

In the late 1990s, government agencies radio systems (including CWIRS) using the 800 MHz frequency band began to experience interference. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) determined the interference was caused by adjacent frequency use by Nextel Communications, Inc. (now, Sprint Nextel).

On July 8, 2004, the FCC issued an order requiring all 800 MHz licensees to move to new frequencies. The FCC further ordered that Sprint Nextel provide funding to all licensees nationwide to reconfigure their systems.

Current Status

In response to the FCC order, ISD developed a two-phase project plan for CWIRS reconfiguration. The Phase 1 (design plan and price proposal) agreements were approved by your Board on February 20, 2007. Phase 1 was completed in October 2007 when the design plan and price proposal were delivered to the County.

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Phase 2 (Implementation) has been delayed due to difficulties experienced by the U.S. State Department during its negotiations with Mexico for a border agreement for frequency band reallocations. Accordingly, border and adjacent licensees, including the County, have not received replacement frequency assignments, which prevents implementation. Early on in the project, the FCC established a nationwide deadline of June 30, 2008 for completion of the reconfiguration. The FCC has suspended the deadline and will issue a new timeline once negotiations with Mexico are completed. Meanwhile, ISD continues to pursue planning activities that are not frequencies-dependent, so we may expedite the reconfiguration project when a new timetable is established and frequencies are allocated to the County.

Once frequencies are allocated to the County, we will request your Board's approval of the Phase 2 agreements. Also, we will continue to keep your Board informed as significant developments occur. Please contact me if you have any questions or comments.

TT:JLG:z

c: ISD Board Deputies
William T Fujioka
Ellen Sandt